

NEWS

From the Office of

Brad Mitzelfelt

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San Bernardino County

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Mitzelfelt Condemns Theft of Mojave Cross

SAN BERNARDINO – San Bernardino County Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt today issued the following statement on the theft of the World War I memorial cross in the Mojave National Preserve:

“This outrageous act of vandalism is a slap in the face to veterans all over the country, and to the rule of law. The cross has been at Sunrise Rock since 1934 as a simple and poignant tribute to the veterans who served and died in World War I, and by extension, to all who have served. Supporters and patriots spent nearly a decade defending the memorial all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court because its original placement on public land was challenged in court.

“Our highest court ruled last month it could stay, so this act is illegal and immoral. Whether this act was related to that decision or not, I will fully support efforts to bring these thieves and/or vandals who are responsible to justice. Further, I will offer any assistance I can in restoration of the cross.

“If this evil act was an attempt to make a political statement, it is not an act protected by the First Amendment, and it further points to a misunderstanding about the meaning of the establishment clause of the First Amendment – it doesn’t mean government has to eradicate all religious symbols.”

Mitzelfelt commended the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the custodians of the cross and of which he is a member, for offering a \$25,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible.

“We don’t have World War I veterans to thank personally anymore. The Mojave Cross was a way of doing that. I look forward to seeing this important symbol back on Sunrise Rock,” Mitzelfelt said.

Mitzelfelt represents San Bernardino County’s First District, which encompasses much of the Mojave Desert and includes all of the Mojave National Preserve.